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A DISCRIMINATING GUIDE

DAVID ANTIN AND RICHARD MELTZER
Talk Art at LACE

David Antin is a very funny man. He's also very smart. In fact, he may be the funniest smart man I know. Antin is a talk artist, a portable stand-up poet with cassette deck whose non-stop impromptu verbiage covers every conceivable subject. His style is personal and anecdotal, with a Duchampian tongue sassily in cheek. His wordy commentaries on art, language, current events or the social behavior of our species constitute high and dry humor. Antin's narratives are autobiographical "fiction" with a critical philosophical base, and his talk performances are an excursion through the formidable Antin brain. The author of *Talking at the Boundaries* and *Tuning*, Antin gets inside the phenomena of human language and the act of talking. His recent radio piece *Direct Address* (*Soundings*, on KPFK) was a masterful linguistic montage that made unexpected connections between art jargon and recollections of New York Jewish relatives, Trotsky's overcoat, etc. A professor of visual arts at UCSD, Antin is the man responsible for the haiku sky poems that appeared over the Santa Monica Pier in May (at the SMARTS Festival). His public performances in L.A. are too few and far between, and worth changing whatever other plans you have.

On the same bill is Richard Meltzer, a man of serious contradictions and irreverent humor. The former lyricist for the rock band Blue Oyster Cult also studied art with Allan Kaprow, the high priest of art and life performance. A notoriously "smartass" poet with a high regard for "brilliant bad taste," Meltzer favors sex and sports as subjects. He came into prominence as one of the first rock critics and predictably defies literary tradition. He'll be reading from *L.A. Is the Capital of Kansas and the Tropic of Nipples, Seventeen Insects Can Die in Your Heart*, and his autobiography, *Caned Out*. The titles may give you a clue as to how Meltzer's mind works and what he does with words. It's visceral stuff. But hidden in the intentional crudeness is a surprising vulnerability, maybe even a streak of the romantic. "... half an hour ago I smelled myself/and pretended it was you." *At LACE, 1804 Industrial St., downtwn.; Sept. 12, 10 p.m.; $5. (213) 624-5650.*

—Jacki Apple

BAZAAR & RUMMAGE

If one went by TV movies, one would have to assume that those afflicted with trendy diseases-of-the-week were one-dimensional, cartoonish, whiny, sad-sack dweebs. But England's Sue Townsend has populated her rummage sale with a full human range of comedic agoraphobics, and even explores to hilarious effect the office politics of agoraphobia. The Benny Hill showgirl who retreated after her stage act was "reviewed" with pelting plastic pineapples "wouldn't want to go around the world — I'd go somewhere nice," and a middle-aged daddy's girl who believes polyester has done inestimable service to women's emancipation has given the best years of her pre-menopausal life to impressing the girls with the importance of self-imprisonment. But a disinterested student social worker and a housebound Cockney comedienne whose tossed-off "bleeding hells" cover the tragedy of her rape by her father offer hope as well as laughter to the women who fear the smell of the streets. All six of the American actresses deserve acclaim for their accurate and differentiated accents and characterizations in this show, previously a hit on the West End. *The 21st Theater Company, at the Windward School, 11350 Palms Blvd., W.L.A.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 7:30 p.m.; $7 general admission, $5 performing union members, $4 senior citizens; thru Sept. 20. (213) 827-5655.*

—Judy Brown

BEYOND BAROQUE
Friday Night Readings

L.A.'s only institution devoted to the presentation and advancement of the work of both unknown local poets and more celebrated poets, Beyond Baroque strikes an appropriately prosodic profile for the Fringe with a special series of Friday Night Readings. Among the scheduled events is a night devoted to those timeless concerns of literati past and present — in other words, "An Evening of Love and War." Hosted by Holly Prado, the evening features *Blue Window* associate editor Celia Woloch and Ameen Alwan, who together expand upon the evening's themes with readings from works on "love and marriage," "sex and death" and "ancestors and children." Also on the schedule, renowned pop artist John Baldessari gets into the act with an evening of talk and slides about his recent work and upcoming show at the Margo Leavin Gallery; and with "Latino Literature Night," host Fernando Castro introduces readings by poets Max Benavidez, Victor Valle, Naomi Quinonez, Alma Cervantes and Lindsey Haley. *Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd., Venice; "An Evening of Love and War," Sept. 4, 9 p.m.; "An Evening With John Baldessari," Sept. 11, 8:30 p.m.; "Latino Literature Night," Sept. 25, 8:30 p.m.; $5. (213) 822-3006.*

—Bill Raden

Byron Pepper

David Antin

STAN BRAKHAGE
The Loom and Love Sacrifice

Stan Brakhage teaches you how to see again. His films transform ordinary life into a dreamlike state, at once in touch with the cosmos and the people next door. Brakhage's own universe, his favorite subject, is the focus of two new films. *The Loom* stars his barnyard menagerie — donkeys, lambs, goats, geese and chickens — in what Brakhage calls "a visual symphony of animal life on earth." *Love Sacrifice* promises to reveal "the secret filth" of his misdeeds. It's no secret that Brakhage's spiritual epics, like Andrei Tarkovsky's, are often tough going, but they'll leave you feeling somehow transformed. *LACE, 1804 Industrial St., downtwn.; Sept. 28, 8 p.m.; $4. (213) 624-5650.*

—A. Zeichner

M'lissa Mayo (see EZTV sidebar).

CABARET SATYRICON

Although Jane Cantillon co-opts the description "avant-vaudeville," the term ain't exactly copyrighted, and is also appropriate for this entirely eclectic, electric and eccentric grab-bag of performance art. Socio-political chanteuse Cantillon plays up to her bad-girl superimage with a frenzy that nears that of the four guys who propel the Exotic Women and crack wise heresies in their "To Hell in a Handbasket." Glen Meadmore also enjoys being a girl in his exploration of bad entertainment, "What Makes a Man a Woman." Thereafter, the Dispossessed perpetrate a multimedia ex-urb musical, "Suburban Ramadan"; Johnnie Graves demechanizes overt consciousness; Mitchell Young Evans offers up a series of corporeal images of alchemical elements through mime; and Brian Chic does for the bullwhip what Gallagher did for the watermelon. Top it off with Frank Blau & Insect Effect in the creation performance "Forty Winks," and what have you got? A multidisciplinary good time. *Lhasa Club, 1110 N. Hudson Ave., Hlywd.; Sept. 4, 8 p.m.; $7.50. (213) 461-7284.*

—Judy Brown

HAMILTON CAMP ET AL.
"Sunday Soiree"

The possibilities are endless at this hoedown. Hamilton Camp and family present an amalgamation of musical entertainment flavored with the Camps' theatrical bent: folk-fusion, chamber jazz, '60s surf, country-rock, music from the Andes, British blues, jam sessions, improv, mimes or comedians with props. September's schedule includes post-folk chamber pop from New Flesh and singer-songwriter Bob Kuhen on the 6th. If you crossed Joan Rivers and Ginger Baker, you might get something like Robin Ryan's *The Drummer* on the 13th, with Hamilton Camp and the Camptown Family Band. On the 20th, once again New Flesh and kazoo, jew's harp, honky-tonk and harmonies from three girls who might be considered L.A.'s answer to the Roche sisters, the Life Is Grand Band, which returns on the 27th with the Camptown Family Band. *Heliotrope Theater, 660 N. Heliotrope Ave., Hlywd.; Sundays, Sept. 6-27, 7:30 p.m.; $6. (213) 660-2300.*

—K. Canoe

CAST THEATER
Savage in Limbo

John Patrick Shanley's powerful bar play makes a strong case for non-naturalistic theater. Five lost souls, all age 32, gather nightly at the Scales bar to hunt for anything to get their lives off permanent stall. Brutalized innocents, they are stuck, alone, ancient with suffering. Though not one explicit reference to their plight is ever made, this play forms a devastating portrait of spiritual despair. Roxanne Rogers' masterful direction perfectly underlines the "concert" aspects of Shanley's play. She elicits boldly stylized yet individual performances, especially from Laurie O'Brien, Elizabeth Ruscio and Betsy Slade. The brat pack has seldom seemed so frayed, so beaten. *Cast Theater, 804 N. El Centro Ave., Hlywd.; Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 7 p.m.; $15; thru Sept. 27. (213) 462-8265.*

—Maryl Jo Fox

CHANCE

Here's a tall order: a "classically influenced, vocally oriented New Age quartet" that sports contrabass, cello, vocals and syndrums and somehow manages, throughout the evening, to work in poetry, visuals and improv. According to Cheryl Grainger, lead vocalist and published poet, the four members of Chance come from classical and rock backgrounds, consider their ensemble to be "like chamber music but at the same time a real offshoot of it," and work with cello and bass in "unusual" (not unnatural, we hope) ways. This "straight-ahead" concert consists of all original material, performed by Grainger, cellist Ed Willett, contrabassist Oscar Hidalgo, and drummer Dick Cunico, who combines a full drum set with electronic "happenings." *Unitarian Community Church, 1260 18th St., S.M.; Sept. 12, 8-10 p.m.; $6. (818) 980-9623.*

—Mary Beth Crain

COMMONWEALTH THEATER
Murder in the Cathedral

To perform a play set in a cathedral *in* a cathedral — if nothing else, it saves you the cost of building a set. But there's also a certain atmospheric and even spiritual appropriateness to the approach, given the somber, medieval, ritual cast of this stately verse play by seventh-inning believer T.S. Eliot on the subject of the martyred (later sainted) Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury and an early supporter of the separation of Church and State — which

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